

**News from Rep. Stephanie Herseth
For Immediate Release
Contact: Russ Levsen, 202-226-4449**

**HERSETH URGES RUMSFELD NOT TO REDUCE RESOURCES FOR
NATIONAL GUARD**

**With Quadrennial Defense Review and 2007 Budget Approaching,
Already Over-burdened Guards May Lose Resources**

January 19, 2006, Washington, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Stephanie
Herseth today wrote to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld urging him
to properly recognize the needs of the National Guard as part of the
Quadrennial Defense Review and 2007 Budget recommendations.

Recent reports have indicated that the Department of Defense plans to
reduce National Guard end strength and reorganize its force structure.
Herseth wrote, "As you work to complete the Quadrennial Defense Review
and prepare budget priorities, I hope that you consider any proposal that
affects National Guard strength with a full appreciation for the crucial role it
plays in our nation's defense at home and abroad. At a time of war, we
should not divert resources from one of our military's most effective, most
versatile and most valuable components, the National Guard."

The President's 2007 budget and the Quadrennial Defense Review are
scheduled to be released on February 6th this year.

The full text of Herseth's letter is below.

January 19, 2006

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

I write to share my concerns regarding recent reports that the Department of Defense plans to reduce National Guard end strength and reorganize the National Guard's force structure as part of the Department of Defense's Quadrennial Defense Review and fiscal 2007 budget proposal. While I recognize the need to modernize the Army and Air Force and the impacts of modernization on defense spending, I am deeply concerned about reducing our nation's most cost-efficient and versatile troops.

The contributions of the National Guard in Iraq and Afghanistan and the response to the Hurricane Katrina and Rita disasters have clearly demonstrated that the National Guard is essential to protecting the homeland and fighting the Global War on Terror. As you know, more than 85 percent of available Army National Guard units have been mobilized and over 50 percent of the land combat forces in Iraq are Army National Guard. In addition, Air Guard units have flown more than 200,000 sorties in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As you work to complete the Quadrennial Defense Review and prepare

budget priorities, I hope that you consider any proposal that affects
National Guard strength with a full appreciation for the crucial role it plays
in our nation's defense at home and abroad. At a time of war, we should
not divert resources from one of our military's most effective, most versatile
and most valuable components, the National Guard.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you on this
issue.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Herseth

Member of Congress

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